whō/there be no where in the world nether so nedy nor so sore/and so syk nor so impotent/and so sore in paynes as we. And that so farforth that if he myght se them all on the tone syde/and but one of vs on the other syde we be very sure that ꝓ world wolde pyte one of vs/more than them all. But although we be more beggars then your beggers be/as folk dayly beggyng our almes of you and them both: yet sup we not them as one of them bothe a nother/but we pray and requyre you to gyue them for our sakes/wherby your gyft gretly tumforteth vs both. And they be also our proctours and beg in our name/ꝛ in our name receaue your money/wherof we receue both your deuocyon ꝛ theyr prayours. So that ye may be well assured/there coud be put no syk nor supplycacyon forth for theyr auauntage/which we wold in eny wyse hinder/but very gladly forther in all that euer we myght. But in good fayth as our pore brethern the beggars be for many cau ses greatly to be pytied for theyr disease and sores/sorow payn and pouerte: so do we mych in thys case sorow the yre mishap/ꝓ they haue nott had at the leste wyse so muche fortune/as to fall vppon a wyser seruener to make theyr supplycacion: but vpō such a one as vnder his great wylynes she weth so lyttell wytt/ꝓ begynnyng with a cloke of charyte/doth by and by no lesse dysclose his hatered ꝛ malice/than if he nothyng els had entended/but to cast of the cloke and set out his malyce naked to the shew. Wherin syr ye a beggers proctoure he goeth forth so nakedly/that no begger is there so bare of cloth or money/as he she weth him selfe bare of fayth/lerninge/trouth/wyt or charyte. Which thyng as it all redy well appereth to wise me: so will we make it eupdēt to all men/takyng our begynnyng a the declaracyon of his entre with: which one thyng well parceyued/will be suffycient to an swer and ouercome all his hole enterpuse. Wold be it we nether shall nede nor doo purpose to cumber you with reherssall and reprose of all his lyes: for ꝓ were to long a work/wherof we: fere ye shuld be very to abyde the hering. But of so many we shall pray you take pacience whyle we she we you some/and such as for the mater be requysyte to be knowen/for as much as all his proues be specially grounded vp on them.

¶ And furst to begyn where he beginneth/where he sayth that the nō ber of such beggars as he pretendeth to speke for/that is as him selfe calleth them the vnetched hydeouse monsters/on whō he sayth scar= cely eny eye bare loke/the foule vnhappy sort of lepers ꝛ other sore people/nedy/impotēt/blynde/lame and syk/lyuing onely of almes: haue theyr numbers now be so sore encreased/that all the almoyse of all the well dysposed people of the realme ys nott halfe inough to sustayne them/ but that for very constraynte they dye for hunger: ¶

Folio Into

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Vnto all those wordes of hys/were yt not that thoughe we well wy
out self be sayd vntrew/yet wold we be lothe so to lay as a lye to hy
charge eny thyng/wherof the vntrewth were not so playnly parcey
ued/but that he myghte fynde some fauourers whych myghte say t
sayd trew: els wold we paraduēture not let to tell hym/that for a h
gynnyng in these few wordes he had wrytten two lyes at onys. I
we shuld tell you what nōber there was of pore syk folke in days p
sed log before your tyme: ye were at lyberte not to beleue ye. Ho
be it he cānot not yet on the tother syde for hys part nether/bryng yo
forth a bederoll of theyr namys: wherfore we must for bothe our p
be fayn to remyt you to your owne tyme/ yet not frō your chyldhe
(wherof many thyngys men forget when they come to farr grea
age) but vnto the days of your good remēbraunce. And so doyng/ w
suppose yf the sory syghtys ꝑ men haue sene/had left as gret impre
on stykk remaynyng in theyr hartys/as the syght maketh of the pre
sorow that they se: men should thynk & say ꝑ they haue in days passe
sene as many syke beggers as they se now. For as for other syknes
they rayn not god be thanked but after such rate as they haue done
tymes passed. And thē of the french pokys. xxx. were a go went ther
about syk/fyue agayn̄ one ꝑ beggeth with them now. Wherof wh
so lyst to say that he seeth̄ other wyse: we wyll hold no great dysp
cyons with hym therupon/because we lakke the namys of both th
sydes to make the tryal with. But surely who so shall say the contr
ry: shall as we suppose: ether saye so for hys pleasure/or els shall
fare by his syght as folkes fare with theyr felyng/ whych what the
fele they whyne at/ but what they haue felt they haue more then ha
forgotten/though they felt it ryght late. Whych maketh one that ha
but a pore boyle vpon hys fynger/thynk the grefe more great/tha
was the payne of a great boch that greued hys hole hand lyttell mo
than a moneth afore. So that in thys poynt of the nomber of syk beg
gers so sore encreased so late/albeit we wyll forbere so to say to hym
as we myghte well say: yet wyll we be so bolde to denye it him till he
bryng in some better hyng than hys bare word for the prose.

¶ And in good faith if he be put to the prose of the tother poynt also
that is to wyt that for very constraynt those pore syk folk dye for hū
ger: we verely trust & thynk he shall seke farr and fynde very few
be fynde any at all. For albeit that pore householders haue these der
peres made ryght hard shyft for foune: yet our lorde be thanked me
haue not bene so farr from all pyte/as to suffer pore impotēt parson
dye at theyr doorys for hunger.

¶ Now where as he sayth that the almes of all well dysposed peple
of thys reame is not half inough to sustayn them/and the well dyspo
set

people he calleth in thys matter all them that gyueth them almoyse/
ꝑ he speketh not of one yere nor tweyn but of these many yeres no
passed/ for neyther be the nomber of the clergy nor theyr possessyons
nor the freres almes in whych thyng he layeth the cause why the al-
mes of good people is not half sufficyent to kepe ꝑ sustayn the poꝛe
and syk beggers fro famyshyng/ any great thynge encreased in these
.x. or .xii. or .xx. yeres last passed/ ꝑ therfore if that he sayd were tre wer
then by all these .x. yeres at the lest/ the almoyse of good people hath
not bene half able to susteyn the poꝛe ꝑ syk beggars frō famyshynge.
And surely if that were so that in .iiii. or .v. yeres in which was plenty
of corne/ the poꝛe ꝑ syk beggars for lak of mennys almes died so fast
for hunger; though many shuld falle syk so sore agayn/ yet had they in
the laste .ii. dere yeres dyed vp of lyklyhod almost euerychone. And
whether thys be tre or not we purpose not to dyspute: but to referr
and report our self to euery mānys eyen and eares/ whether any mā
here of so many dede/ or se so many the fewer.

¶ When he hath layd these sure stonys to begyn the ground ꝑ foun-
dacyon of hys byldyng wyth/ that soꝛe and syk beggars be so soꝛe en
creasyd/ that the almesse of all the good people of thys realme is not
half inough to sustayn thē/ and that therfore by very cōstraynt they
dayly dye for hunger: vppon them he layeth a nother stone/ that the
cause of all thys euyll is the great possessyōs of the spyrytualte/ and
the great almes gyuen to the freres. But herein furst he layth that
he sayth tythes and all such other profett as rise vnto the chyrch by
reason of the spyrytuall law or of mennys deuocyon/ that they haue
the thyrd parte of all the temporall landys of the realme. Whych who
so can tell as mych of the reuenewes of the realme as he can tell lytell
that made the booke/ doth well know that though they haue mych: yet
is the thyrd part of all farre an other thyng/ ꝑ he sayth in thys poynt
vntre. Than goeth he to the poꝛe freres. And there as we told you
he sheweth that ꝑ almes geuen them/ of certeynte amounteth yerely
vnto .xliii. thousand. ¶ ¶ ¶. cxxiii. li. vi. s. viii. d. sterlyng: paraduen-
ture men wold wene the man were some apostata/ and that he neuer
cowd be so pryuy to the freres reconyng/ But if he had bene long theyr
lymytour/ and had sene some generall dewe of all theyr hole accountys.
But surely syth the man is bad inough beside/ we wold be loth folk
shuld reke hym for a postata/ for surely he was neuer frere for aught
that we know: for we neuer wyst that euer in his lyfe he was half so
well dysposed. And also whey ye here the groūd of hys reconyng: ye
wyll your self thynk that he neither knoweth mych of theyr maters/ ꝑ
of all the realme beside make as though he knew many thyngys for
tre/ whych many men know for fals. ¶ For furst he putteth for the

grounde of hys rekenyng that there are in ꝑ realme/ two
thousade paryſh churches/ whych ys one playne lye to begynne wit
Then he putteth ꝑ euery paryſhe one wyth a nother/ hath ten how
holdes in yt: meanynge beſyde ſuche poze howſes as rather aſke al
mes the gyue/ for of ſuch ye wot well ꝑ frerys get no quarterage. A
poynte albe yt the grounde be not ſure/ yet bycauſe yt may to man
men ſeme lykely/ therfore we lette yt paſſe. But then he ſheweth fe
ther for a ſure trouth a thynge that all men knowe ſurely for a grea
lye: that ys to ſay that of euery howſholde in euery paryſhe/ euery o
ꝑ fyue ordres of freres hath euery quarter à peny: for we knowe ful
well ſ ſo do many of you to/ fyrſt ꝑ the comen people ſpeke but of .iiii.
ordres/ the whyte/ the blakke/ the auſtayne/ and the grey/ and whyc
ys the fyft in many partes of the realme ſe we folke can telle you. Fo
yf the queſtyone were aſked abowte/ there wolde be peraduentur
founden many mo the more pyte it ys/ that could name you the gren
freris then the crowched. ye knowe ryght well alſo that in many a p
ryſhe in englande/ of fourtye howſeholdes ye ſhall not fynde fowr
paye ne pther. v. penſe a quarter nor. iiii. nother/ and many a paryſh
neuer a peny. And as for the. v. d. quarterly/ we dare boldely ſay tha
ye ſhall fynde yt payd in very fewe paryſhes thorowe the realme/ y
ye fynde yt payd in any. And yet thys thyng beyng ſuche a ſtarke ly
as many men all redy knoweth/ and euery man ſhortely may fynd
it/ he putteth as a playne well knowen trouth for a ſpecyall poſte t
here vpp his rekenyng. For vpon theſe grownde now maketh h
a clere rekenyng in thys manet enſuyng/ whyche ys good alſo to b
knowen for folk that wyll lern to caſt a compt. Ther be. xii. paryſhes
and in eche of them. x. howſholdes Now haue ye the hole ſome of th
howſholdes. v. hondred thowſand and twenty thowſand. Euen iuſ
Now now we to the money then. Euery order of the. v. ordres of frere
hath of euery of theſe howſholdes a peny a quarter Hūma for euer
howſe amonge all the. v. ordres euery quarter. v. d. And here by ma
ye lerne that fyue tymes one maketh. v. Now thys ys he ſhe wet
you amonge the. v. ordres of euery howſe for the hole yere. xx. d. an
ſo lerne ye there that. iiii. tymes fyue maketh. xx. Hūma ſayth he. v
hondreth thowſand and. xx. thowſand quarters of angellys. Ne
We wold not that bycauſe the realme hath no coyne called the quar
ter aungell/ ye ſhuld therfore ſo face myſſe take the mat as to wen
that he ment ſo many quarter ſakkes of aungels. For in dede (as w
take hym) by the namyng and compteyng of ſo many quarters of au
gels/ he meaneth nothyng elles but to teche you a poynt of rekenyn
and to make you perceyue and knowe/ that. xx. d. ys the fourth part
of. vi. s. viii. d. For after ꝑ rate yt ſemeth that he valueth the aunge
nobl